

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 1302

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, MX, VE

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CUBAN PARTICIPATION IN CTV CONGRESS

REF: (1) MEXICO 940; (2) CARACAS 535 (3) CARACAS 913

1. INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE CONFEDERATION OF VENEZUELAN WORKER
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(CTV) JOSE VARGAS TOLD THE LABOR ATTACHE FEBRUARY 3 THAT CUBA (CTC) HAS NOT, REPEAT NOT RECEIVED AN OFFICIAL INVITATION TO SEND FRATERNAL OBSERVERS TO THE CTV CONGRESS SCHEDULED FOR LATE APRIL. VARGAS STATED THAT A DECISION ON INVITATIONS HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE. CTV PRESS AND PROPAGANDA SECRETARY MANEUL PENALVER TOLD THE LABOR ATTACHE IN A SEPARATE INTERVIEW THAT HE, PENALVER, OPPOSED INVITING THE CTC TO THE CONGRESS. HE ADDED THAT THE DECISION ON WHOM TO INVITE WOULD BE MADE BY VARGAS, ACTING CTV SECRETARY GENERAL AUGUSTO MALAVE VILLALBA, AND HIMSELF AS THE LEADERS OF THE CONTROLLING ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD) FACTION OF THE CTV. PENALVER ADDED THAT YUGOSLAVIA WOULD BE INVITED TO ATTEND THE CTV CONGRESS BECAUSE THE YUGOSLAVS HAD SUPPORTED THE CTV WHEN IT WAS UNDER CUBAN COMMUNIST ATTACK IN THE EARLY 1960'S.

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2. VARGAS STRESSED THAT ACTING CTV PRESIDENT RAFAEL LEON LEON DID NOT SPEAK FOR THE CTV IN THE STATEMENTS HE MADE DURING HIS VISIT TO CUBA AND MEXICO (REFTEL 1 AND 3). VARGAS FURTHER ACCUSED LEON OF PLAYING "CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC - CLAT POLITICS" ON THE TRIP AND

OF TRYING TO CAUSE TROUBLE BETWEEN THE CTV AND MEXICO (CTM).
VARGAS SHOWED THE LABOR ATTACHE A LETTER ADDRESSED TO RAFAEL CAMACHO GUZMAN, PRESIDENT OF ORIT, PROTESTING THE ORIT CABLE (REFTEL 1) AND STATING THAT ORIT SECRETARY GENERAL JULIO ECHEVERRY WAS CONFUSED REGARDING CTV INTENTIONS. THE VARGAS-CAMACHO LETTER STATED THAT THE ANTI-U.S. TRADE LAW MEETING (REFTEL 2) WOULD BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE LATIN AMERICAN CHIEFS OF STATE MEETING IN CARACAS (CARACAS 12150), NOT WITH THE CTV CONGRESS. VARGAS ADDED THAT THE CUBAN EXILES WHO SURROUND ECHEVERRY, PARTICULARLY JOSE "PEPE" ESTRADA, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ORIT CABLE. VARGAS STATED THE CUBANS ARE VERY UNHAPPY ABOUT THE CTV-CTC INTERCHANGE, VENEZUELA'S DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION OF CUBA, AND THE CTV'S ANTI-ORIT STAND AND ARE TRYING TO DISCREDIT THE CTV BY SPREADING LIES.

3. VARGAS DENIED CATEGORICALLY THAT ANY KIND OF INTERNATIONAL MEETING WILL BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CTV CONGRESS EXCEPT FOR THE OPEC MEETING (CARACAS 0082) ALREADY SCHEDULED WHICH WILL END PRIOR TO THE CTV CONGRESS.

4. COMMENT: LEON DOES NOT REPRESENT THE AD MAJORITY OF THE CTV AND IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE CTM REFUSED TO RECEIVE HIM. DESPITE THE VARGAS AND PENALVER DISCLAIMERS THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT THE CTV WILL INVITE THE CTC TO SEND OBSERVERS TO THE CTV CONGRESS. THERE IS NO CHANCE AT ALL OF THE WEALTHY CTV, WITH ITS DIRECT ACCESS TO THE GOV'S HUGE REVENUES, ASKING FOR OR RECEIVING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE CTC IN STAGING ITS DOMESTIC CONGRESS OR ANY OTHER MEETING IN CARACAS. VARGAS AND PENALVER BOTH REPEATED THEIR OFT-STATED ASSURANCE THAT VENEZUELA HAS NO INTENTION OF FORMING AN ORGANIZATION WHICH EXCLUDES THE AFL-CIO AND/OR INCLUDES THE CTV.
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